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EPA's Aging Initiative
Mail Code 1107A
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW - Room 2512 Ariel Rios North
Washington, D.C. 20460

Attn: Joanna Rodman

re ur 5/29/03

Dear Ms. Rodman:

You asked for suggestions from the Aged. I consider myself a middle-aged man of 85. I received a degree in Chemical Engineering from Texas A&M in 1942 and became a Naval Engineer in Cornell U. I worked 15 years at Texas Testing Laboratories as a Geotechnical Engineer where I was manager. I mention these to lend a bit more credence to my suggestions.

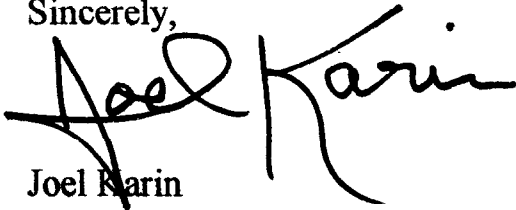
I have three suggestions. The first concerns air pollution by internal combustion engines. There are alternatives available, but no incentive to develop them commercially and market them. The Federal government already knows the answer and is using it on the tobacco industry. The only reason it has not been more successful with tobacco is that there is no alternative. In the case of internal combustion engines, we have electric powered equipment now on the market. A Federal tax on internal combustion engines would provide the impetus to switch.

My second suggestion is to stop the building of coal-fired power plants. The cities are still going ahead full steam with these. Some cities have found that wind and sun are excellent sources of energy, but the others are ignoring them for the more conventional coal. The cities think the coal burners are cheaper, but when the medical costs are factored in, their arithmetic is proven false. The government only has to quit subsidizing the coal burners.

The third of my suggestions concerns the safety of our aquifers. Countless cities in the US depend on these as their sole source of drinking water. There are many, many laws protecting surface water but my research has been able to turn up absolutely none to

protect the aquifers. Here in Texas recently, in the City of Uvalde, a dry clearing company caught fire. The uneducated firemen used thousands of gallons of water to fight it and washed all the chemicals down a nearby well and into the aquifer. Purification plants were installed at a cost of millions, but the residents are still drinking chemicals. My suggestion is: **EDUCATE THE FIREMEN**. They should be taught where the recharge zones are, how to know if hazardous materials are involved (by color of flame, smell, packaging, etc.), which surface water would wash into the aquifer, where subsurface strata exist which would eventually lead contaminants into the drinking water. The captain of each station should be given the authority to decide which fire to fight and which to allow itself to burn out without being held accountable. Only the insurance providers would be held accountable and they would be allowed to adjust their rates in endangered zones accordingly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Karin". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "J" and a long, horizontal stroke for the "K".

Joel Karin